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# THE LAST STARFIGHTER™



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# THE LAST STARFIGHTER™

*Produced by Ted Kryczko*



This is the story of THE LAST STARFIGHTER. You can read along with me in your book. You will know it is time to turn the page when you hear the chimes ring like this...

**LET'S BEGIN NOW**

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"Greetings, Starfighter! You have been recruited by the Star League to defend the Frontier against Xur and the Ko-Dan armada!" The Starfighter video game bleeped and boomed as Alex Rogan skillfully destroyed the Ko-Dan fighters one by one. This was the only bright spot in Alex's dreary life at a dull trailer park. When he held the Starfighter controls, his creative imagination soared!



One day was particularly depressing for Alex. "Look at this! My college loan has been turned down! I'll never get out of here!" Angrily, he ran up the hill to play Starfighter.

As he racked up points with a vengeance, word spread through the trailer park that Alex was going for the record. The cheering crowd watched as Alex finally reached the Ko-Dan command ship and blew it up! The game screen flashed "Record breaker! Record breaker!"





After his victory, Alex relaxed on a porch swing with his girlfriend. "There's got to be more to life than this place, Maggie. One day soon, I'm going to leave here, and I'm taking you with me."

Maggie snuggled closer to him. "It's you and me forever, Alex."



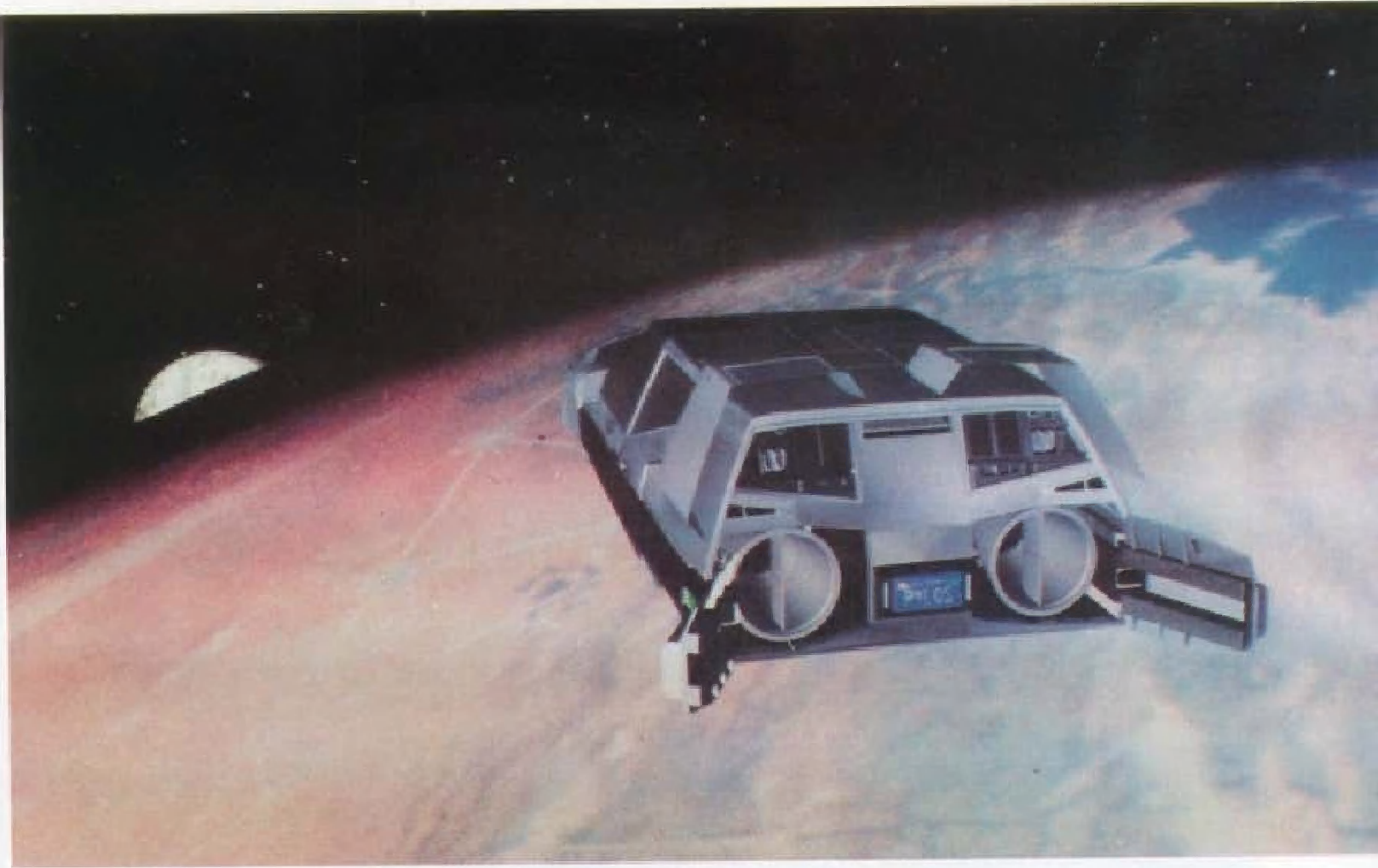


That night a sleek, futuristic car drove into the trailer court. The car door hissed upward. When Alex peeked inside, the driver smiled at him. "My name's Centauri, and I invented Starfighter.



Your amazing performance on that game is light-years ahead of the competition! Light-years! That's why Centauri's here to offer you the chance of a lifetime! Trust me. Get in, my boy!"

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As if in a trance, Alex climbed into the car. Suddenly, the door slammed shut, and the car shot off down the road, racing faster and faster! "Hey, what's going on? Where are we going?"

Centauri grinned. "You don't peek at your presents before Christmas morning, do you? Trust me." He pushed a button, and Alex was thrown back in his seat as the car leapt into the air and flew off into outer space!



Centauri steered the starcar through hyperspace. "We're going to the planet Rylos, my boy. You'll love it!" They were soon landing at a military complex filled with warriors and gleaming starships.

A dazed Alex was handed a flight uniform and led to a briefing room full of strange-looking aliens from across the galaxy. Ambassador Enduran stepped before them. "Greetings, Starfighters! You have been recruited to fight Xur and the Ko-Dan armada."







Alex gripped a tentacle of the alien next to him. "Hey, this is just like in the game!"

Suddenly, a projected image appeared in the briefing room! It was Xur, the evil son of Ambassador Enduran. "You should not have banished me, Father. I am now on the Ko-Dan command ship, ready to lead your enemies into battle against you! Soon we will destroy you all! And not even your mighty Starfighters can save you!"



Alex leaped up, looking for Centauri. He found him with a friendly Star Navigator named Grig. "There's been a big mistake! I didn't ask to be brought here! I want to go home!"

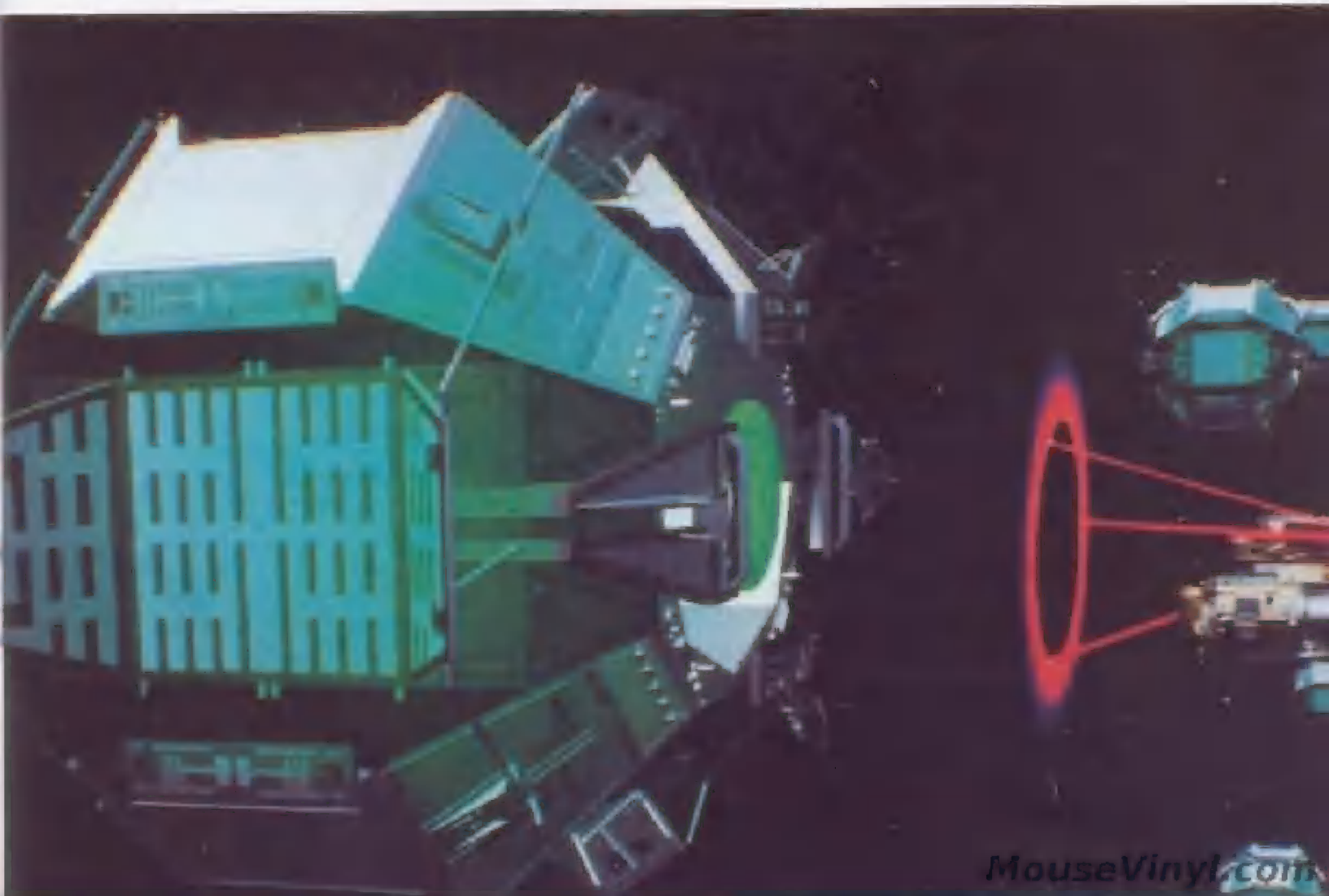
Centauri grinned. "What? And miss all the excitement?!"

The lizard-like Grig shook his head. "This is most irregular, Centauri. If the boy won't fight, you must take him home."



Angered by Alex's decision, Centauri flew him back to Earth.

At the same moment, the Ko-Dan armada was sitting just outside the Frontier. Under Xur's direction, the command ship was burning a hole through the massive energy wall that protected the friendly planets of the galaxy. Xur rubbed his hands together gleefully. "When the Frontier is down, Rylos and the Starfighter base will be defenseless before me. Then I will rule the galaxy!"



With evil joy, Xur turned to his Ko-Dan captain. "The Frontier is down! Attack!" Advance fighters swooped through space, pounding the Starfighter base with laser cannons and proton missiles. Explosions ripped through the base, leaving it in flames.







Arriving at the trailer court, Centauri gave Alex a communicator. "If you change your mind about helping us, call me on this."

Back in his room, Alex was surprised to find someone in his bed! "Hey, you look just like me! What's going on here?"

The duplicate sat up. "I'm a Beta-unit, a robot sent to take your place. But why did you come back here? Your life is so *boring!*"



Alex stepped outside to think. Just then an alien hand shot through the roof and grabbed him! Alex tore free and ran, as laser bolts slashed after him!

The Beta-unit dragged Alex to cover. "That's a Zando-Zan gunman, sent by Xur! He wants all Starfighters destroyed! Call Centauri back, quickly!"







Within moments, the starcar skidded to a stop. Centauri leaped out, his blaster blazing. The gunman fell, but he got off a final shot. Centauri crumpled in pain. Alex helped him into the car. "You saved my life! I'm sorry I've been so much trouble."

"Xur won't give up, Alex. Look, as long as you think of yourself as a kid from a trailer court, that's all you'll ever be."

Alex nodded. "When do we leave for Rylos?"

The injured Centauri stayed alert long enough to return Alex to the demolished Starfighter base. Grig instantly hustled the boy into a gunstar, telling him of Xur's sneak attack. Alex fingered the controls of the ship. "Hey, these are just like the ones on the game back home! Except for this button here."

"That's an untried weapon called the Death Blossom. Don't push it unless you have to. Hang on!" The gunstar blasted into space.







Alex searched the skies. "Grig, how many Starfighters are left?"

"Counting yourself, Alex? One."

"The last Starfighter, huh? Well, if we can't outnumber them, we'll just have to outthink them. Suppose we hide behind that asteroid until the armada passes and then attack from the rear?"

"Attacking while confusion reigns! An interstellar plan, Alex!"

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Meanwhile, back on Earth, another Zando-Zan gunman attacked Beta while he was with Maggie. She stared unbelieving at the wires in Beta's charred chest. "Alex, you were shot! What's happening?"

"Look, I'm a robot, and if I don't stop that alien gunman from sending the news to Xur, your *real* Alex is in big trouble!" Beta drove after the gunman and rammed his truck into the Zando-Zan ship. Both were destroyed in a ball of flame!



At that moment aboard the Ko-Dan command ship, Xur read the incomplete Zando-Zan transmission. "Message: The last Starfighter is ..." He glared at the message. "The final word must be 'dead'! The last Starfighter is *dead*! Nothing can stop us now! Ahead full to Rylos!"





Alex and Grig watched the hundreds of Ko-Dan fighters fly past their hiding place. "We're behind them now, Grig. This is it!" The gunstar zoomed toward the command ship, crippling it with photon bolts! Then Alex tore through the armada firing madly! Just like in the game, scores of fighters were demolished by his skill.

Then Alex watched fearfully as the remaining fighters surrounded them on all sides. "Grig, what's going on?"





Grig shook his head. "I am afraid, Alex, that we are the focus of the deadly *Circle of Doom* formation."

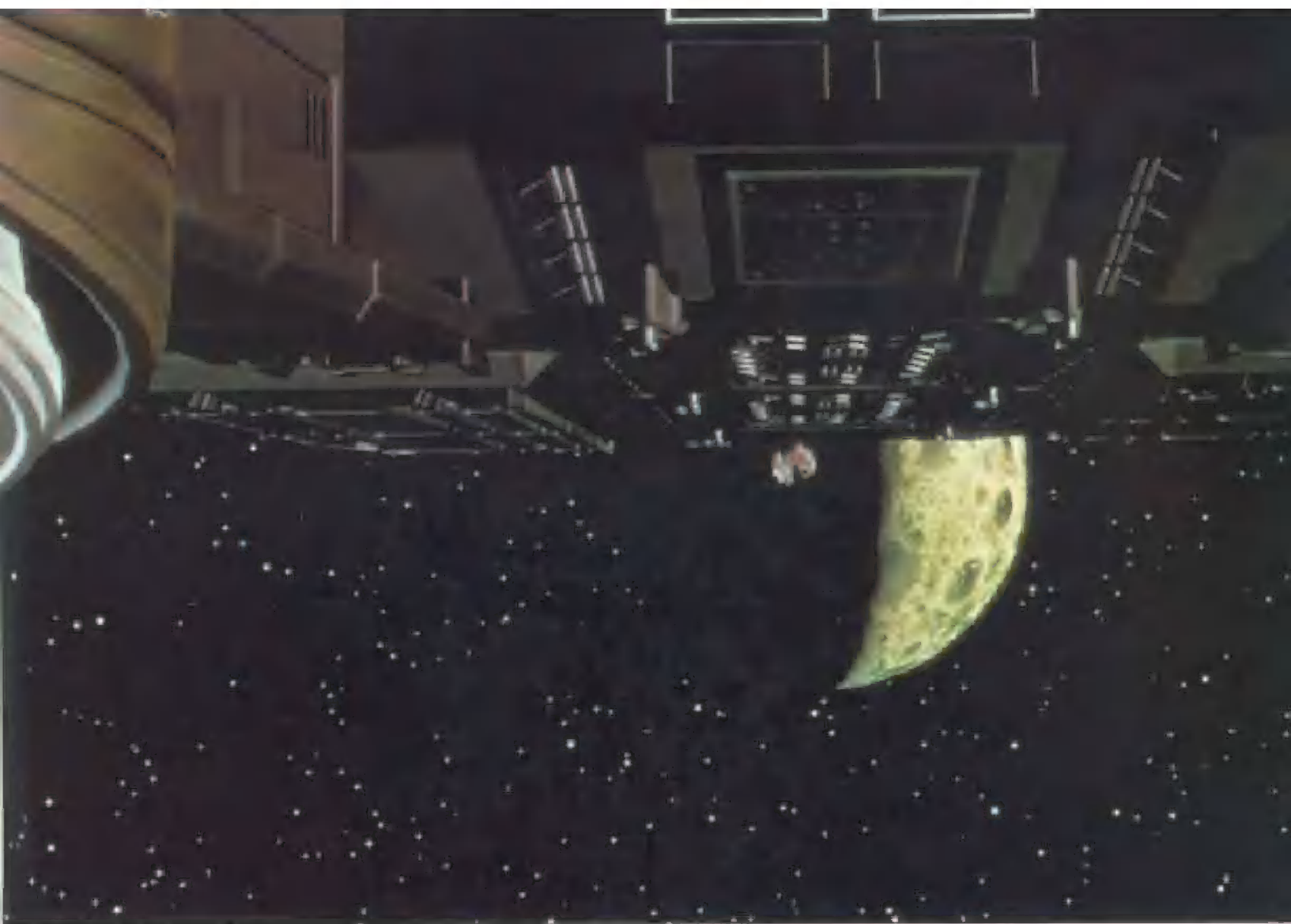
"I never faced this in the game! We'll have to use the Death Blossom!" The gunstar opened like a huge flower, missiles and rockets bristling in all directions. Suddenly, the ship spun like a great fiery whirly-gig, firing all its weapons at once!

Every fighter in the gunstar's kill zone was blown to vapor. Grig checked his gauges. "All engine power is gone, but we've defeated the armada! My wyfoid and my sixty-thousand little Griglins back home are safe!"

Alex was startled by what he saw on the external sensors. "We haven't won yet, Grig! The command ship is on a collision course with us! And we have no power to move out of its way!"







Grig began to throw switches. "Hold your breath, Alex! I'm switching our life-support power to the engines!" With a sudden roar, the gunstar slid past the command ship. Hull scraped against hull as Alex fired his last torpedo pointblank. The huge Ko-Dan ship rocked violently, but Xur managed to escape in an emergency pod. Then the doomed ship crashed into the green moon of Rylos!

Millions of grateful Rylans turned out to greet the Last Starfighter! Alex and Grig waved to the cheering crowds.



Fully recovered from his wounds, Centauri shook Alex's hand. "You're a galactic hero now, Alex. You must stay here and train new Starfighters."

"I will, Centauri. But first I've got some unfinished business. I'll be back soon."



Late one night, Alex's trailer court was shaken by the roar of rockets. Folks rushed outside to see a spaceship land! Astonished, they watched Alex and a lizard-like alien step from the gleaming gunstar. Charming as ever, Grig greeted the frightened crowd. "Hello, everyone. Alex has told me so much about all of you."

Alex turned to Maggie. "See, I told you I was going to get out of here. I just came back to get you, Maggie. Will you come?"





Maggie hugged her Starfighter tightly. "You and me forever, Alex." Together they climbed into the waiting gunstar.

In the distance, the trailer park video game came to life. "Greetings, Starfighter, you have been recruited..." The words were lost in the rumble of the gunstar's blast off. Alex and Maggie were on their way to their new home in the stars.





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